



JOINT NEWS RELEASE FROM

U.S. TRADE & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 26, 2005

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USTDA AND NOAA SPONSOR ASIA-PACIFIC ALL-HAZARDS WORKSHOP

Event to Showcase Best Practices and Technologies in Warning and Response Systems

Preparations for future natural disasters and other hazards through the development of modern warning systems and response capabilities will be the focus of an upcoming workshop sponsored jointly by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA). The workshop, for Indian Ocean tsunami-affected countries and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum economies, is being planned in partnership with APEC and in cooperation with other U.S. government agencies, and will take place June 6-10, 2005, at the Marriott Waikiki Beach Resort & Spa in Honolulu, Hawaii.

"In the wake of last year's devastating tsunami, economies are identifying the best strategies to protect their citizens from future natural disasters and national emergencies," said USTDA Director Thelma J. Askey in announcing the international event. "This workshop will provide an opportunity to share information and best practices and to learn about the latest technology that can be used to implement effective solutions."

Realizing Tsunami and Disaster Resilience Through New Partnerships and Technologies is the workshop theme. The educational and technical program will bring emergency preparedness and disaster management experts from the U.S. government, international organizations and the private sector together with decision makers from Indian Ocean and APEC economies.

"This is an opportunity to discuss the importance of establishing a regional all-hazard warning system following the December tragedy in the Indian Ocean region," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "An effective all-hazards warning system requires sophisticated hazard detection capabilities, risk assessments, warning dissemination methods and an educated public that understands what to do when a warning is sounded. Addressing these challenges on a global scale will result in safer and more disaster resistant communities."

A key objective of the workshop is to promote an effective response to a range of natural and man-made disasters and emergencies. The workshop will facilitate an ongoing regional dialogue on the development and sustainability of all-hazards information and risk management systems. It will provide an overview of an all-hazards early warning system, with a special emphasis on interoperability among the national systems currently being

developed in tsunami-affected economies. In addition, the event will feature case studies and technologies in all-hazards risk reduction from the United States and Asia-Pacific region.

Representatives of U.S. agencies and international groups, including USTDA, NOAA, APEC, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and U.S. state government agencies, will attend. In addition, the workshop will host delegates representing national emergency and disaster planning organizations and national meteorological, hydrological and tsunami operational organizations from more than 20 APEC and Indian Ocean economies.

U.S. firms with technologies and solutions for developing all-hazards warning and response systems should plan to attend. Registration includes all workshop materials, meals and receptions listed on the official agenda, as well as the opportunity to participate in pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings with other workshop participants. For more information, and to inquire about sponsorship opportunities, contact Pamela Peseux, MFM Trade Meetings, by telephone at (301) 335-1725, or visit the workshop website at www.trademeetings.com.

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, feasibility studies, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance funds to support sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services.

NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of the nation's coastal and marine resources.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation is the premiere forum for facilitating economic growth, cooperation, trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. APEC has 21 members that account for more than a third of the world's population, approximately 60 percent of world gross domestic product and about 47 percent of world trade. APEC's Member Economies are: Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; The Republic of the Philippines; The Russian Federation; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; United States of America, and Viet Nam.